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C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000587

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV; PACOM FOR FPA

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [BM](#) [NLD](#)

SUBJECT: NATIONAL CONVENTION SET TO RECONVENE, NLD  
PARTICIPATION UNCERTAIN

REF: A. RANGOON 563

[B](#). RANGOON 544

Classified By: COM Carmen Martinez for Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: According to top NLD leaders, as of May 12 the SPDC has not responded to NLD "suggestions" put forth two weeks ago that would improve the political environment and allow the party to attend the regime's forthcoming reconvened National Convention. Registration for the Convention will take place on May 13-14, which has given rise to rumors and speculation that GOB authorities will respond positively at any moment to the NLD suggestions, which include the release of party leaders ASSK and U Tin Oo and the opening of party offices. However, there are no visible signs that the SPDC intends to respond at all. NLD officials say they will wait until the close of registration on May 14 for a response from the regime, at which time the party plans to release a statement addressing their participation in the Convention. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) On the eve of the registration period (May 13-14) for the regime's imminent National Convention, Rangoon is rife with rumors and speculation regarding the status of detained NLD leaders Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo, as well as the opposition party's intentions with regard to participation in the Convention.

[1](#)3. (C) We met briefly on May 12 with several NLD CEC members, including party spokesman U Lwin, Chairman U Aung Shwe, and U Nyunt Wei. The latter reported that the NLD has to date heard no response from the SPDC to the party's "suggestions" (conditions) for participation in the Convention (ref B). U Nyunt Wei added that the NLD has also received no overtures from GOB authorities for a dialogue with NLD leaders on Convention issues or other substantive political matters.

[1](#)4. (C) U Lwin said that the NLD planned to wait until the evening of Friday May 14, following closure of registration for the Convention, for a response from the SPDC. At that time, with or without a response from authorities, the NLD, he said, plans to issue a statement expressing its official stance on participation. U Lwin suggested that the closure of registration on May 14 is not the final opportunity for the party to decide on participation, intimating that the NLD may in fact have additional leeway given that the first three days of the Convention (May 17-19) will be reserved for sundry ceremonial and housekeeping procedures.

[1](#)5. (C) U Lwin acknowledged that many pro-democracy ethnic political parties were waiting for the NLD to declare a final position on participation before making their own determinations. He said that the NLD planned to communicate with the ethnic parties at an appropriate time, but the party leadership was still deliberating on an appropriate mechanism and venue. U Lwin observed that the NLD would not provoke the regime by meeting openly with the leading ethnic political coalition, the UNA, whose members included many banned parties. However, he added, the NLD would likely convoke the Committee to Represent the People's Parliament (CRPP), slightly more palatable to the regime, for a joint meeting at NLD headquarters.

[1](#)6. (C) Comment: According to NLD sources, the party's top four leaders (including ASSK and U Tin Oo) met again as a group on May 8 and may have also held subsequent meetings. Despite U Nyunt Wei's information that GOB authorities have not pursued a dialogue with the NLD, there have been reports that SPDC envoys continue to meet privately with ASSK. Regardless of what meetings may have taken place, there is scant information available on the regime's intentions regarding the NLD's requests and no visible signs that the SPDC is actively preparing to release ASSK or U Tin Oo or to allow the NLD to reopen upcountry offices. End comment. Martinez